

# Guinea

## Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

An estimated 48.8 percent of children ages 7 to 14 were counted as working in Guinea in 1994. Approximately 47.6 percent of all boys 7 to 14 were working compared to 50.2 percent of girls in the same age group.<sup>2122</sup> The majority of working children are found in the informal sectors, carrying out activities such as subsistence farming, small-scale commerce, and fishing.<sup>2123</sup> Children also work in gold and diamond mines, granite and sand quarries, and as apprentices to mechanics, electricians, and plumbers.<sup>2124</sup> Guinean children engaged in the worst forms of labor were found hauling granite and sand for little or no money in artisanal mining. Girls engaged in prostitution as early as age 14.<sup>2125</sup>

Guinea is a source, transit and destination country for trafficking in persons. Guinean girls are trafficked for sexual exploitation to Cote d'Ivoire, Benin, Senegal, Nigeria, South Africa, Spain and Greece and internally as domestic servants.<sup>2126</sup> Guinean boys are trafficked internally for street vending, shoe shining, and for forced labor in agriculture and diamond mining. Children are also trafficked from Mali, Guinea-Bissau, Sierra Leone and Senegal for forced labor in Guinea.<sup>2127</sup>

Years of conflict in neighboring Liberia, Sierra Leone and Cote d'Ivoire have resulted in large-scale displacement of civilians, particularly in the forest region. The children in Guinea's forest region are reportedly subject to economic exploitation and sexual abuse. In N'Zerekore and Kissidougou, UNICEF identified some 200 unaccompanied minors from Sierra Leone and Liberia who were being exploited in diamond mines, plantations, and in homes.<sup>2128</sup>

Public education is free<sup>2129</sup> and compulsory for 6 years, between the ages of 7 and 13.<sup>2130</sup> In 2002, the gross primary enrollment rate was 81 percent, and the net primary enrollment rate was 65 percent.<sup>2131</sup> Gross and net enrollment ratios are based on the number of students formally registered in primary school and therefore do not necessarily reflect actual school attendance. Enrollment remains substantially lower

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<sup>2122</sup> UCW analysis of ILO SIMPOC, UNICEF MICS, and World Bank surveys, *Child Economic Activity and School Attendance Rates*, October 7, 2005. Reliable data on the worst forms of child labor are especially difficult to collect given the often hidden or illegal nature of the worst forms, such as the use of children in the illegal drug trade, prostitution, pornography, and trafficking. As a result, statistics and information on children's work in general are reported in this section. Such statistics and information may or may not include the worst forms of child labor. For more information on the definition of working children and other indicators used in this report, please see the section in the front of the report titled "Data Sources and Definitions."

<sup>2123</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2004: Guinea*, Washington, DC, February 28, 2005, Section 6d; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2004/41607.htm>. See also UNICEF, *Situation Des Enfants et Des Femmes, Programme De Cooperation 2002-2006, Republique de Guinee*, Conakry, 2000, 83-84.

<sup>2124</sup> UNICEF, *Situation Des Enfants et Des Femmes*, 84.

<sup>2125</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2004: Guinea*, Section 6d.

<sup>2126</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Trafficking in Persons Report*, Washington, DC, June 3, 2005; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2004/33189.htm>.

<sup>2127</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2128</sup> According to various estimates, there are between 8,000 and 11,000 refugees and displaced persons residing in Guinea's forest region. An additional 45,000 people are reported to live in refugee camps in the region. U.S. Embassy – Conakry Official, email correspondence to USDOL Official, August 11, 2006.

<sup>2129</sup> Republic of Guinea, *Rapport relatif au principe de l'abolition effective du travail des enfants*, Conakry, September 4-8, 2000.

<sup>2130</sup> Although the government provides free tuition, fees related to schooling still prevent children from enrolling. See U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2004: Guinea*, Section 5.

<sup>2131</sup> UNESCO Institute for Statistics, <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/TableViewer/tableView.aspx?ReportId=51> (Gross and Net Enrollment Ratios, Primary; accessed August 2006).

among girls than boys. In 1994, 34.8 percent of children ages 7 to 14 years were attending school.<sup>2132</sup> Children, particularly girls, may not attend school in order to assist their parents with domestic work or agriculture.<sup>2133</sup> In general, enrollment rates are substantially lower in rural areas.<sup>2134</sup> There is a shortage of teachers, school supplies and equipment, and school facilities in Guinea.<sup>2135</sup>

## Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The Labor Code sets the minimum age for employment at 16 years, although children under the age of 16 may work with the consent of authorities.<sup>2136</sup> The Labor Code permits apprentices to work at 14 years of age. Workers less than 18 years of age are not permitted to work at night or work more than 10 consecutive hours per day. The penalty for an infraction of the law is a fine of 30,000 to 600,000 GNF (USD 5 to 105).<sup>2137</sup> The Labor Code also prohibits forced or bonded labor and hazardous work by children under 18 years. Section 187 of the Labor Code prohibits hazardous work, defined as any work likely to endanger the health, safety, or morals of children. The Ministry of Labor determines which jobs are considered hazardous. Violations of these laws are punishable by fines ranging from 80,000 to 1,600,000 GNF (USD 14 to 281) and 8 days to 2 months in prison.<sup>2138</sup> Guinea's Penal Code prohibits trafficking of persons, the exploitation of vulnerable persons for unpaid or underpaid labor, and procurement or solicitation for the purposes of prostitution. The fine for violations of the procurement or solicitation law ranges from 100,000 to 1,000,000 GNF (USD 17 to 175) and imprisonment for 2 to 5 years when the crime involves a minor less than 18 years old.<sup>2139</sup> The penalty for trafficking is 5 to 10 years of imprisonment and the confiscation of money or property received through trafficking activities.<sup>2140</sup> The official age for voluntary recruitment or conscription into the armed forces is 18 years,<sup>2141</sup> and the regulation is reported to be strictly enforced within the government army.<sup>2142</sup>

The worst forms of child labor may be prosecuted under different statutes in Guinea. In 2002, the Labor Inspectorate within the Ministry of Labor had only one inspector and several assistants in each district to

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<sup>2132</sup> UCW analysis of ILO SIMPOC, UNICEF MICS, and World Bank surveys, *Child Economic Activity and School Attendance Rates*. The marked increase in school enrollment over the last decade is attributed to the fact many refugee camps have schools.

<sup>2133</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture, *Global Food For Education Pilot Program, Guinea: World Food Program*, 2003 [cited June 18, 2003], [previously online]; available from <http://www.fas.usda.gov/excredits/gfe/congress2003/counryrpts.htm> [hard copy on file]. See also UNICEF, *Situation Des Enfants et Des Femmes*, 70.

<sup>2134</sup> World Bank, *Education for All Project*, [online] 2002 [cited December 16, 2005]; available from <http://web.worldbank.org/external/default/main?pagePK=64027221&piPK=64027220&theSitePK=351795&menuPK=351827&projectid=P050046>, Mohamed Fofana, USAID Natural Resources Management official, interview with USDOL official, August 12, 2002.

<sup>2135</sup> USAID, *Education*, [cited June 24, 2005]; available from <http://www.usaid.gov/gn/education/background/index.htm>. See also UNICEF, *Situation Des Enfants et Des Femmes*, 68. According to Teacher's Union representatives, it is common for classes to run as large as 100 students, with only one teacher. See also Guinean Teacher's Union (SLECG/FSPE), interview with USDOL official, August 12, 2002.

<sup>2136</sup> *Code du Travail de la Republique de Guinée*, 1988, Article 5.

<sup>2137</sup> See *Ibid.*, Articles 31, 145-148, 167. For currency conversion see FXConverter, in Oanda.com, [online] 2006 [cited August 09, 2006]; available from <http://www.carosta.de/frames/convert.htm>.

<sup>2138</sup> *Code du Travail*, 1988, Articles 2, 186, 187, 205. For currency conversion see FXConverter.

<sup>2139</sup> U.S. Embassy- Conakry, *reporting*, July 19, 2001. See also Government of the Republic of Guinea, *Penal Code*, The Protection Project Legal Library, [online]; available from <http://www.protectionproject.org>. For currency conversion see FXConverter.

<sup>2140</sup> See U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2004: Guinea*.

<sup>2141</sup> Although the official age is 18, few people have birth certificates, and in some cases, parents have been known to encourage under-18's to apply to the armed forces. See Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2004*, Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, [online] n.d. [cited December 16, 2005], 70; available from [http://www.child-soldiers.org/document\\_get.php?id=777](http://www.child-soldiers.org/document_get.php?id=777).

<sup>2142</sup> U.S. Embassy- Conakry, *reporting*, February 28, 2005.

enforce relevant legislation.<sup>2143</sup> While the government spoke out against child labor, it lacked the financial and legislative resources to combat it.<sup>2144</sup>

## Current Government Policies and Programs to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The Government of Guinea is participating in a regional ILO-IPEC program funded by the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) and the Cocoa Global Issues Group that seeks to withdraw children from hazardous work in the cocoa sector, provide income generation and economic alternatives, and promote education.<sup>2145</sup> The government also takes part in a USD 4 million USDOL-funded education initiative to provide non-formal education to children engaged in exploitative child labor.<sup>2146</sup> The USAID-supported Sustainable Tree Crops Program is working in Guinea to address child labor in the cocoa sector, and is coordinating its activities with the USDOL-funded ILO-IPEC program.<sup>2147</sup>

Selected Child Labor Measures Adopted by Governments		
Ratified Convention 138	6/6/2003	✓
Ratified Convention 182	6/6/2003	✓
ILO-IPEC Member		✓
National Plan for Children		
National Child Labor Action Plan		
Sector Action Plan		

The Ministry of Education has overall responsibility for the implementation of a USD 70 million World Bank Education for All Project that aims to promote universal primary schooling, build schools, and improve the quality of education. The program focuses on girls, street children, and rural areas.<sup>2148</sup> The Government of Guinea is receiving funding from the World Bank and other donors under the Education for All Fast Track Initiative, which aims to provide all children with a primary school education by the year 2015.<sup>2149</sup>

USAID is assisting the Ministry of Education and promoting access to quality basic education by focusing on teacher training and community participation in education and girls' schooling.<sup>2150</sup> UNICEF is implementing an advocacy program to increase girls' enrollment.<sup>2151</sup> In addition, the World Food Program is implementing a school feeding program that offers meals to children as an incentive for school attendance with special emphasis on girls.<sup>2152</sup>

<sup>2143</sup> Bengaly Camara Deputy Inspector of Labor, interview with to USDOL official, August 12, 2002.

<sup>2144</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports- 2004: Guinea*, Section 6d.

<sup>2145</sup> ILO-IPEC, *West Africa Cocoa/Commercial Agriculture Program to Combat Hazardous and Exploitative Child Labor (WACAP)*, project document, RAF/02/P5 0/USA, Geneva, September 26, 2002.

<sup>2146</sup> The four-year project began in September 2004. U.S. Department of Labor - International Child Labor Program, *Combating Child Labor and Exploitation through Education (CCLEE)*, Project Summary, 2004.

<sup>2147</sup> ILO-IPEC, *West Africa Cocoa/Commercial Agriculture*, project document.

<sup>2148</sup> World Bank, *Education for All Projects*. See also USAID, *USAID Education*.

<sup>2149</sup> World Bank, *World Bank Announces First Group Of Countries For 'Education For All' Fast Track*, The World Bank, [online] n.d. 2002 [cited December 16, 2005]; available from <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,contentMDK:20049839~menuPK:34463~pagePK:34370~piPK:34424,00.html>.

<sup>2150</sup> USAID, *USAID Education*. See also Fofana, USAID interview, August 12, 2002.

<sup>2151</sup> UNICEF, *At a Glance: Guinea*, UNICEF, [online] 2004 [cited April 27, 2005]; available from <http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/guinea.html>.

<sup>2152</sup> World Food Program, *USDA Global Food for education Pilot Program*, WFP, [previously online] 2004 [cited May 17, 2004]; available from <http://www.fas.usda.gov/excredits/gfe/congress2003/countryrpts.htm> [hard copy on file]. This three-year program ended in 2005.